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CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

13 DECEMBER 2018

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Santa Ana - Twenty People Face Illicit Drug, Firearms Charges in Gang Sweep

(U) Officials announced yesterday the indictment of 20 people linked to gang activity in Santa Ana and nearby communities. The suspects are accused of selling and distribution of meth and heroin, as well as firearms offenses. Seven of the defendants were believed to be members of the "Alley Boys" street gang, and four others apparently belonged to other Orange County gangs. One operation was run at a budget hotel in Santa Ana, according to officials.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [KTLA News](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) New York – Former El Chapo Employee Claims US-Mexico Train Route Moved Cocaine

(U) Brooklyn - Former Sinaloa Cartel member turned informant Tirso Martinez Sanchez explained how El Chapo made hundreds of millions of dollars by smuggling cocaine on trains. According to Sanchez, the Sinaloa cartel took control of cooking oil tankers that were on trains. The cartel would siphon out cooking oil from the tankers then implant secret compartments that would hold several kilos of cocaine - covered in grease and submerged in oil, to avoid detection. Once the train got to a warehouse in New Jersey, the cartel would offload the drugs into box trucks then transported into New York City. The cartel would then transfer the cocaine-filled trucks to domestic drug distributors, often at fast food restaurants.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [Independent](#)

(U) New York – MS-13 Members Arrested for Plotting Murder, Burglary

(U) Queens - A dozen reputed members of MS-13 were arrested in an operation in Queens and charged with variety of offenses, including conspiracy to commit murder. The court accused the men of plotting to kill rival gang members and planning the execution of a man who left the gang. The gang members conducted their own surveillance of targets, accessed firearms and discussed locations for the hit, including the Rufus King Park in Jamaica, Queens, authorities said.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [ABC 7 News](#)

(U) Texas – FBI Raid Leads to Arrest of 13 Men with Alleged Cartel Links

(U) Dallas - Thirteen people tied to Mexican cartels have been arrested on federal drug conspiracy charges after an FBI-led bust yesterday morning. Investigators say the individuals — who they say are connected to Mexico's Los Zetas and New Generation Jalisco cartels — have conspired to distribute methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin since March 2014. The group's fluid hierarchy developed over time, and money from drug sales and distribution either funded purchase of additional drugs or was sent to Mexico.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [Dallas News](#)

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UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**(U) Texas – Large Quantity of Illicit Drugs Seized at US-Mexico Bridge**

(U) Pharr - A drug seizure estimated to be worth around \$7 million was found at the Pharr-Reynosa International Cargo Facility earlier this week. US Border agents at facility were alerted to a commercial shipment of stone blocks and used drug-sniffing dogs to discover packages of drugs hidden within the shipment. All told, authorities seized 35 packages believed to be methamphetamine weighing 320 pounds, seven packages believed to be cocaine weighing almost 40 pounds and two packages believed to be heroin weighing around seven pounds.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [Fox News](#)

(U) Texas – Bail Denied for Ex-Army Ranger Accused of Trafficking Guns for Mexican Cartel

(U) San Antonio - Jose J. Soto Jr., 36 - a former Army Ranger from San Antonio - is accused of supplying one of Mexico's drug cartels with hundreds of high-powered firearms and tens of thousands of rifle magazines. Federal authorities suspect Soto became a weapons supplier to the Cartel del Noreste, or CDN, a faction of the former Zetas.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [My San Antonio](#)

(U) Utah – Five Charged in Alleged Plot to Deliver Drugs to Utah Prison Inmates

(U) Gunnison - Five people were charged Tuesday in what investigators say was a plot to smuggle drugs into the Central Utah Correctional Facility, using fast food. Investigators monitored mail and phone conversations coming from the prison from 11 July through 26 July. During that time, one inmate gave a parolee instruction on how to drop off drugs that would later be picked up, once the inmate was on a work crew and could walk outside the prison gates. The County Attorney stated that the scope of drug addiction in correctional facilities was highlighted by how these, and other, inmates risk enhanced penalties for these actions.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [KSL News](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL**(U) France – Shooting at Christmas Market Declared Act of Terrorism; Gunman Still at Large**

(U) Strasbourg - Hundreds of security forces are combing eastern France for Cherif Chekatt, 29, who has a long criminal record and who shouted, "God is great!" in Arabic and sprayed gunfire during a deadly rampage in Strasbourg's famous Christmas market, officials said. Chekatt had been convicted 27 times, mostly in France but also in Switzerland and Germany, for crimes including armed robbery. He had been flagged for extremism and was on a watch list. A neighbor of Chekatt said he was rarely home and last saw him Monday. Young men from the apartment block said they knew him as someone who seemed destabilized by his time in prison.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [Orlando Sentinel](#)

(U) Mexico – Authorities Raids Clandestine Lab Producing Fentanyl

(U) Mexico City - Federal agents said yesterday that they detained four people in a raid on a clandestine lab that apparently produced the synthetic opioid fentanyl in Mexico City. Only a few such labs have been detected in Mexico in recent years, though Mexico is one of the main suppliers of the deadly drug. Much of the illicit fentanyl consumed in the US originates in China but is often smuggled through Mexico. Mexican cartels have also been known to produce the drug from precursor chemicals mainly imported from China. On 10 September, police in Mexicali, Baja California, raided a clandestine fentanyl lab, resulting in the seizure of 20,000 fentanyl pills.

SOURCE: 12 December 2018, [Associated Press](#)

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